

LOCAL UNIT NEWSLETTER

December 2005

Introducing:



***Harry James, RN, Operating Room
WSNA Local Unit Co-Chair***

Harry James, ICNE alum, started on the "old 5N" med-surg floor; med-surg ICU 2 years; OR 15 years. After USNU and 1199 challenged WSNA, I saw the commitment that WSNA along with many UW WSNA nurses had made to all of the nurses at the UWMC and I put the effort in to understand our RN contract. WSNA has the framework in place to support RNs and make improvements but it takes many/all individual nurses to understand their rights and goals. Of those individual nurses, I am just one wanting to promote improvements for nursing.

***Keith Koga, RN, 5SE Cardiothoracic ICU
WSNA Local Unit Co-Chair***

Hi, my name is Keith Koga, RN and I am honored to serve as your UWMC Local Unit Co-Chair. I graduated in June 2004 from Shoreline Community College. My career at the UWMC began as a Hospital Assistant in February 2001. After graduation, I accepted a RN position on 5SE (cardiothoracic ICU). Soon after that I joined WSNA because I believed in its effectiveness. Joining WSNA has given me the opportunity to meet wonderful people and grow as a professional. It has taught me



that nursing is not just about *practical skills* and *critical thinking* but being actively involved in issues that

affect nursing and our patients that we care for.

Nurses have made big strides over the years and I would like us to keep making them. As registered nurses, I believe involvement in a professional organization is pertinent. If we do not than our voices will not be heard. WSNA is not just our collective bargaining unit but a professional organization that looks out for our best interest.

I have always felt that being involved was the best way to promote positive change and preserve those that benefit us, the registered nurses of the UWMC.

I came into this position, a fairly new nurse. I do it because I believe it is important. For those that are new or have been doing it longer, I ask you to help me out by voicing what is important to you. I am here to listen to you. **THANKS!**

***Anita Stull, RN, 7 North
Local Unit Secretary/Treasurer***

Seems like just last week I was in nursing school and someone asked me to join the student nurses association. I said yes and the journey began. I joined the Washington State Nurses Association when I started work at UWMC. At first I was "just a member." Then folks asked, can you help with grievances? I spent 10 years as the Grievance Officer at UWMC. I found grievances a good communication tool between the staff nurse and the manager. It brought both to a table to communicate about a problem the staff nurse had on the unit. If things could not be resolved



***University of Washington Medical Center
Local Unit News***

between the two, then it could be discussed with the manager's manager. Often things were solved on the unit level. I liked representing RNs in bringing up their concerns.

I've been on eight contract negotiation teams. I still keep my contract in my mailbox. When you have a question about your employment, it is a great reference. I've worked Orthopedics, Chronic Pain Management, and Psychiatry. I've worked inpatient units and outpatient clinics. UWMC is a good place to work, but it is an even better place to work because we have an active union representing us.



**Steve Krauss, RN, Operating Room
Local Unit Grievance Officer**

I am Steve Krauss, RN2 in Surgical Services at UWMC. My nursing career started in 1996 when I graduated from Shoreline Community College. As a new grad RN, I worked one year at Duke University Medical Center (Durham, NC) in the CCU - a real baptism by fire.



My family moved back to Seattle where I worked in ICU at Swedish. When offered a perioperative training course there I enrolled, and worked in their ambulatory surgery department before coming to work at UWMC. My first year at UWMC was in 5SE CT-ICU. In 2001, I transferred to the operating rooms, and have been here since then.

I joined WSNA after realizing how much the union does for the nurses at UWMC. Just one of the raises we received because of their negotiations was more than enough to cover the dues. Now it is more important than ever to have a strong union protecting the patients and nurses at our hospital.

**Sibyl Davis, RN, 7N
Membership Officer**

Hi! I am happy to be your new Membership Officer! I have been a nurse at UWMC for 4 years, an RN for 9 years, and working in hospitals since 1981. Since I started volunteering for WSNA, I have really enjoyed meeting with nurses from other units and discussing how things are going. We are all so different, but united in our career path of being advocates for patients while they are receiving care in our hospital and clinics.



Nursing is hard work; it is demanding both physically and emotionally. Finding the time to communicate with other nurses about our working lives isn't easy, especially with nurses from other units. My goal is to help us connect through our WSNA membership so that we can continue to improve our working conditions as we care for our patients. One way we can all connect is through reading and distributing the WSNA Local Unit Newsletter. Hopefully, it will continue to evolve as the voice of nurses at UW -- what we are doing, what we care about, and who we are!

New Member Voices

by Sibyl Davis, RN, 7N

Recently I had the pleasure of interviewing two new nurses,

**Jenny Maissen
and
Melissa Schorn,**



who both work on 7SE. They agree that 7SE is a good place to work -- fast paced and intense, and filled with great people and great staff. Jenny notes that 7SE is proactive in learning from past practice.

**University of Washington Medical Center
Local Unit News**



She mentioned the new Fall Protocol as an example of this. After a fall incident, the unit emphasis focuses on “What else can we do to increase the safety of the patient?”

“One thing they are really pushing now is something as simple as the issue of patient falls while toileting during the change of shift,” Jenny says. “The idea is to have the nurses assist patients with toileting before leaving to give report, lowering the chance the patient will attempt this alone.”

Melissa remarked on how helpful she found the Unit Specific Education Day. She learned of the Palliative Support Team and was able to get a doctor’s order for this service for one of her patients. Since I didn’t know about this service, Jenny explained that the Palliative Care Team will work with an appropriate patient and their family to identify the patient’s primary goal for end of life care. They then carefully work out the specifics to achieving that goal. Both Jenny and Melissa agreed that having the expertise of the Palliative Care Team enhances patient care in remarkable ways!

*Jenny and Melissa,
Welcome to UWMC!*



Transfer Member Voice *by Sibyl Davis, RN*

Sean Mack is a transfer WSNA member from Virginia Mason Hospital who is starting a new position at the UWMC Pain Clinic. His 15 years of nursing includes experience in Hospice, Critical Care, ER, and, most recently, Recovery Room. Prior to Virginia Mason, Sean spent around 6 years as a traveler -- he has great stories of working all over the U.S! Having worked in so many places “makes it easy for me to see how important WSNA is for us.” “WSNA is the opportunity we have as nurses to be a unified voice, a place where

we speak to the needs of our profession and our patients, and to uphold the things we all value as nurses. The quality of the care we provide our patients, the impact on health policy, and quite frankly, the future of nursing, *depends on nurses speaking for ourselves.*”

Welcome to UWMC, Sean,
and good luck with your new
job!



You Were Represented

Over the last two months you were represented by your WSNA officers at: 5 grievance meetings, 2 investigatory meetings, 2 Conference Committees, 2 Surgical Services meetings, 1 University Wide Union Coalition Meeting, 4 New Employee Orientations, 10 walk-throughs, and 2 WSNA Officer Meetings. It’s been a productive 2 months and the work to represent you continues!

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

**Monday,
January 30th, 2006**



Nurse Legislative Day

Join hundreds of nurses and nursing students from around the state. It's an energizing, fun-filled day. Featuring Keynote Speaker Governor Christine Gregoire. **For more information, event agenda, and registration form, visit wsna.org**

University of Washington Medical Center
Local Unit News



Membership Reminder

*It is the responsibility of each nurse to notify the Washington State Nurses Association of any change in work status which may include but are not limited to: name, address, phone number, FTE increase or decrease, leave of absence, medical leave, maternity leave, leaving or joining a bargaining unit. This change must be done in writing either by using a **Change of Information Card** or sending an email to wsna@wsna.org.*

*The Cabinet on Economic and General Welfare (E&GW) policy states, when a nurse is on an unpaid leave of absence, the dues are adjusted to the **Reduced Membership Category** during the unpaid Leave of Absence period. The accumulated dues payment is to begin within 90 day of return to work. The nurse will have up to twelve months to complete payment of these dues. **It is the responsibility of the nurse to notify WSNA of this change in work status.***